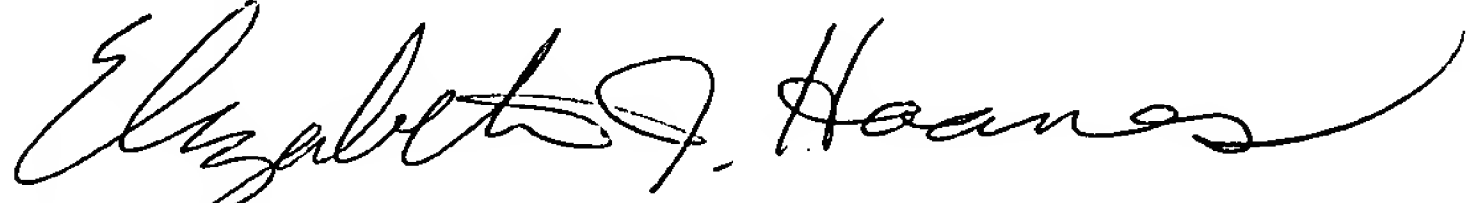


NI *et al.*
Appl. No. 09/448,868

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

STERNE, KESSLER, GOLDSTEIN & FOX P.L.L.C.



Elizabeth J. Haanes, Ph.D.
Agent for Applicants
Registration No. 42,613

Date: April 30, 2001

1100 New York Avenue, N.W.
Suite 600
Washington, D.C. 20005-3934
(202) 371-2600

Version with markings to show changes made

The first paragraph on page 1 was replaced with the following:

This application is a divisional application of U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 09/013,895 [09/013,985], filed January 27, 1998, which claims benefit of 35 U.S.C. Section 119(e) based on U.S. Provisional Application Serial Nos. 60/035,722, filed January 28, 1997 and 60/037,829, filed February 5, 1997. Each of these disclosures is fully incorporated herein by reference.